



BA1
WELCOME
INFORMATION

WELCOME

Welcome to **Manchester School of Architecture**. Your next three years with us are going to be incredibly exciting and you'll probably find that architecture school is a very different learning environment - don't worry, we've got an amazing staff team who will help you make the transition, and in no time, it will feel like home. Our school is characterised by excellence, ambition, boldness, inquisitiveness, innovation, and social responsibility and we take imagination very seriously! We are a contemporary school of architecture in its truest and widest sense. We strive to be at the forefront, tackling contemporary societal issues such as diversity and equality, climate change, and the changing nature of the profession and practice. It is our student body that help us to constantly challenge and push boundaries. We look forward to working with you.

Prof. Kevin Singh
Head of Manchester School of Architecture



Manchester is about the most interesting place you could be studying architecture - in the thick of it. The teachers you will work with are engaged in live projects and investigating new and alternative futures through their research. We teach architecture in a way that puts you at the centre of your education. Through modules in Design, Context and Production we ask you to discover what kind of creative architect you want to be, to investigate the matters that you are concerned with and develop your expertise. We are looking forward to seeing what you do and who you become.

Anna Gidman
BA(Hons) Programme Leader
Dr Sam Holden
BA(Hons) Deputy Programme Leader



themsarch



MANCHESTER
1824

The University of Manchester

BA1 ARCHITECTURE

First year at Manchester School of Architecture is focussed on understanding and developing your character, skill, aptitude, and passion as an individual, as well as, as part of a vibrant, diverse and inquisitive cohort.

You should be open to experimenting and doing activities to unlock a new understanding of architecture. Your time will be spent making, drawing, thinking and recording in several teaching sessions which will ask you to question the context of the space around you.

We recommend that you carry a small sketchbook with you at all times to sketch and diagram as you begin to notice the details, the artefacts and the inhabitants of our cities. It is important to understand that you already have a vast resource of skills and knowledge within yourselves.

The environment of the studio should be seen as one in which individual and collective investigations and debate with your peers are as important as 'being taught'. You will learn to use a variety of creative techniques over the year and to push the boundary of what you think constitutes architectural knowledge.

Most importantly, you should never be afraid to take risks and to go beyond what you think is 'required'. Be prepared to work hard and to be challenged on your designs in studio sessions by working in ways which you might not understand at first. Do not be scared to think differently and to make a few mistakes along the way.

Everyone remembers their first year at Architecture School, and this is going to be one to remember! It is the most exciting, most free and most creative educational space our discipline has, so make sure you take this opportunity with confidence and enthusiasm!



Dr Lindsay Bush
Lecturer
BA1 Year Lead



Dr Matthew Steele
Lecturer
BA1 Deputy Lead



DESIGN



Studio takes place throughout the year and is split in to Design 1 and Design 2. It is where you will learn how to test and experiment with form, debate ideas and present your own unique proposals.

We will challenge your existing knowledge of space and how space is created. Projects begin from a variety of starting points and increase in scale over the year. Through studio projects, you will become independent designers capable of developing complex briefs and beautiful ideas.

We will encourage you to draw and model your ideas. Designing is a place where we consider and experiment, it is a journey, a process where your first idea develops, changes and iterates until the result is something you didn't necessarily imagine. Get comfortable with being messy, with failing, with testing, with questioning, sharing and listening to each other as well as your tutors.

Over the summer perhaps think about your own home and watch how you use the space and live there. Think about the activities and how much (or how little) space they require. Maybe have a go at measuring yourself and objects around you and try to draw people doing different daily activities. Have you ever tried to draw your home as a plan?



CONTEXT

In first year, context is split into two courses; Histories of Architecture and Sustainable Global Futures.

Histories of Architecture will illustrate how to situate architectural thought and production in a historical and socio-political context, exploring the emergence of different architectural trends and movements in relation to key economic, political, technological, and theoretical shifts occurring throughout the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries and beyond. Drawing on post-colonial approaches, the course aims to provide students with the tools to analyse architectural production and interventions in space beyond aesthetic formalisms. Understanding architecture beyond pure aesthetics stands at the core of a socially informed approach to practice, building the foundations for the architecture student to become a reflexive practitioner.

Sustainable Global Futures will introduce you to the complexity of the climate and biodiversity emergencies, and the plurality of architectural approaches to these issues. Through situating human interference with the environment within a broader context of climate and environmental justice, you will engage with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as a framework for your personal and professional development. Through understanding broader global changes that shape architectural practice, you will be provided with the critical tools to ensure that you can develop ethically informed positions on climate and environmental change that respond to social and spatial justice concerns.

Before you arrive, look around and see if you can work out the age and style of the buildings you see. Have you ever wondered why buildings look like they do? Also perhaps think about how you feel about the climate crisis and how it affects the way people live. How might we reduce energy use in buildings? Any ideas?



Before you arrive, observe your built environment and see if you can work out the age and style of the buildings you see. Have you ever wondered why buildings look like they do? Also perhaps think about how you feel about the climate crisis and how it affects the way people live. How might we reduce energy use in buildings? Any ideas?

Dr Matthew Wells
Senior Lecturer
Histories of
Architecture



Dr Angela Connelly
Lecturer
Sustainable
Global Futures





PRODUCTION

In first year, Production is split into two courses; Principles of Technology and Collaborative Practice

Principles of Technology focuses on the analysis of contemporary case studies of small scale and complexity to introduce key technological principles. The course is delivered through a study of Materials, Structures and Environment & Construction. You will be introduced to climate and associated technological rationales in architectural design and develops skills in analysis and visual representation.

Collaborative Practice is a group project where you will work on 'live' projects with external clients and in collaboration with students from different years. Using real-world situations, projects in this module are led by your groups and centred around peer-to-peer learning enabling you learn from each other and to determine productive and mutually beneficial group-working approaches. A professional working relationship will be developed with an external Collaborator who will present a starting point from which you will develop a brief to establish a project for social impact and/ or community benefit. This ends in a final 1 week design project known as MSA Live where you may develop exhibitions, installations, built projects, workshops, charrettes, processions, and protests.

Get inspired over the summer by reading the incredible [MSA Live 2026 blog](#) and maybe get involved in some architectural events where you live from visiting an exhibition to volunteering for a community building project.

Emily Crompton
Senior Lecturer
Collaborative Practice



Ian McHugh
Lecturer
Principles of
Technology



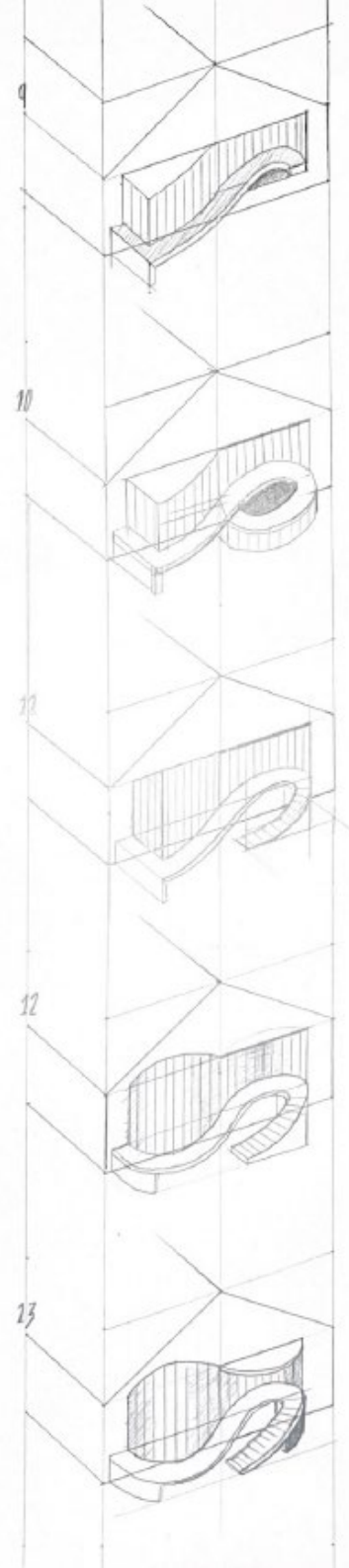
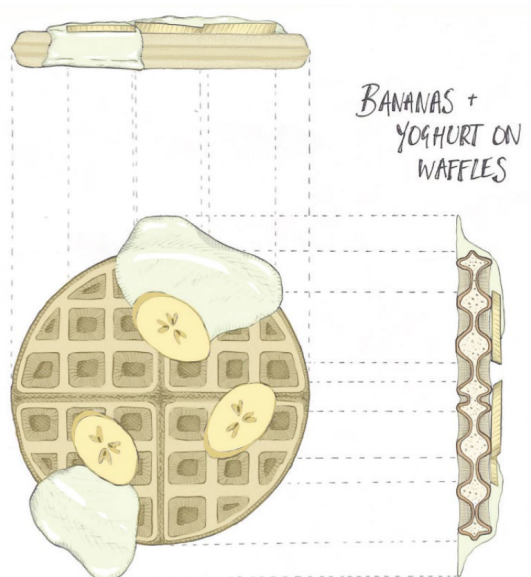
SKILLS

Skills sessions are designed to allow you to develop the many skills required to meet your course requirements. You will learn rudimentary knowledge and techniques that underpin the discipline of architecture.

We value analogue drawings and model making and we want you to learn the basics before you move on to computer modelling and drawing programmes. You will learn techniques such as orthogonal drawing, diagramming, modelling, collage and analysis.

Skills sessions are run by architects who are working in practice as well as some PhD students. There are too many to show you all their photos on here!

Ana coordinates your Skills sessions.



Anastasiya Luban
Lecturer
Skills Lead



WORKSHOPS

At MSA we value hands on model making and we expect you to engage in this. We take model making seriously.

We celebrate process and development of ideas. We want you to have a go and we want you to be brave and test test test!

We learn a lot through iteration. The iterative process is the practice of creating, testing, refining, reflecting and improving. We repeat this cycle over and over.

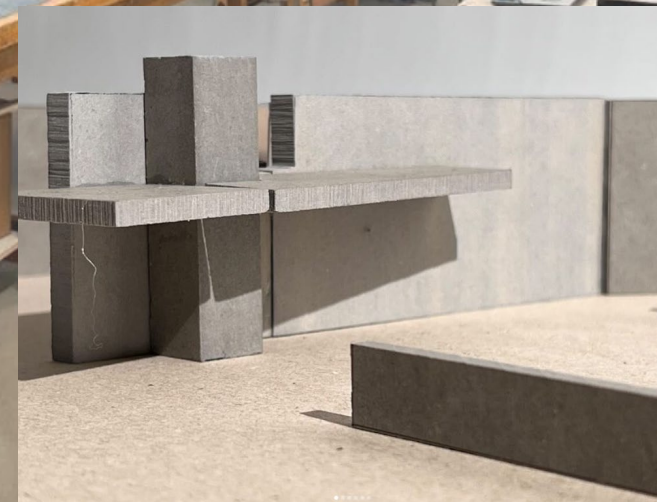
To support your model making we have workshops at UoM and MMU. There are a lot of facilities available, and it is good to make the most of them.

In welcome week you will be given tours and training in the workshops. This will give you confidence to talk to staff and ask them for help when you are making models.

[B.15 modelmaking workshop blog](#)



b15workshop



ADD



Jason Taylor
Senior Lecturer
ADD Lead

Ana Luban
Lecturer
ADD

Jo Cook
Lecturer
ADD



ADD stands for Architectural Digital Design.

It doesn't matter if you are new to digital design or even if you are a seasoned pro, MSA will assist you in taking your digital literacy to the next level.

We can assist you in building a portfolio of digital skills to exceed industry expectations, or to explore an advanced innovative specialism through a series of live workshops, our recorded lecture library, and through individual tutorials. This page will be your main way to interact with the ADD team. It contains:

- One to one tutorial booking system
- All school digital masterclass workshops
- Access to software both on and off campus
- Useful resources to use in your projects
- Links to additional digital courses relevant to your course
- Access to and information on all 4 MSA makerspaces
- Pre-submission checklists (reduce your file sizes and optimize your files)
- A student voice area (we listen to your feedback!)

READING

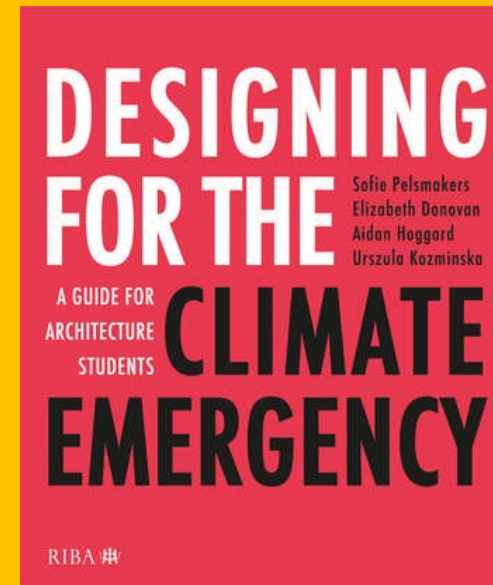
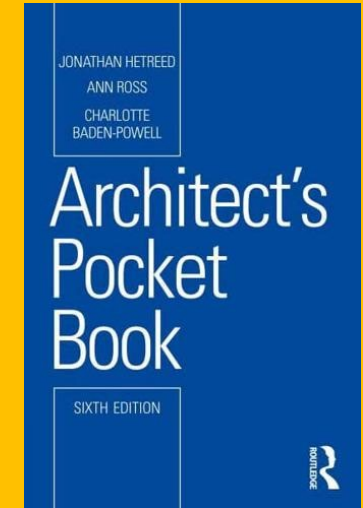
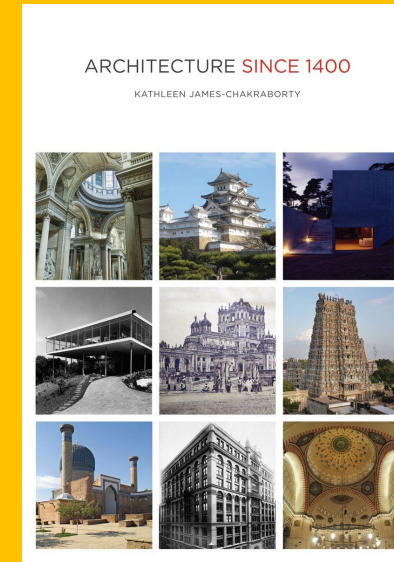
A specific reading list will be provided for each module, however, there are four key texts which will serve as an essential reference in Year 1 and will prove useful throughout your architectural education.

- Architecture Since 1400 (James-Chakraborty, K)
- Architect's Pocket Book (Hetreed, J., Ross, A., Baden-Powell, C.)
- Designing for the Climate Emergency: A Guide for Architecture Students (Pelsmakers, S., Donovan, E., Hoggard, A., Kozminska, U.)
- Studio Craft & Technique for Architects (Delany, M. & Gorman, A.)

These can be bought as a bundle exclusively from the Blackwells on University Green in Manchester with a £30 discount.

You can reserve or pay and then collect when you arrive. If you want them delivered to your home beforehand, a postage charge will apply.

Blackwell's University Bookshop
University Green 146 Oxford Road
M13 9PG
phone - 0161 274 3331
email - manchester@blackwell.co.uk



READING +

Suggested wider reading

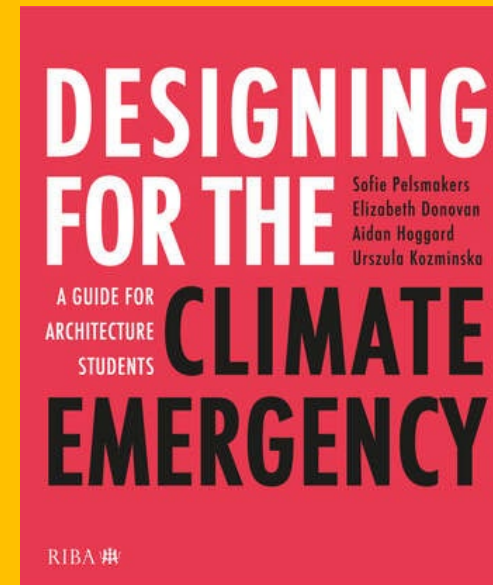
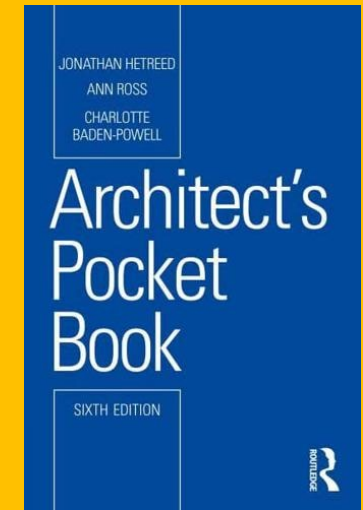
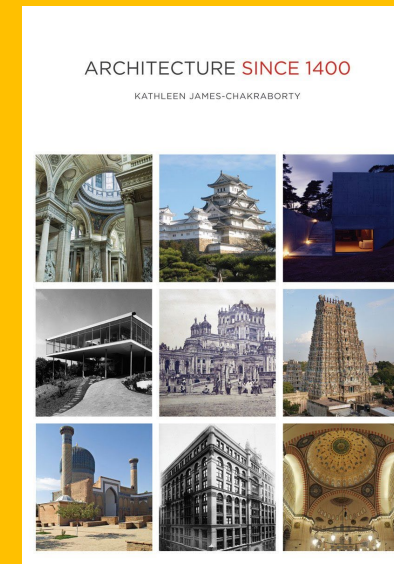
Reading is a vital aspect of your course and personal development. Each module you study will come with a suggested reading list. There are also many architectural journals and magazines worth reading to immerse yourself in latest research and news. Books, journals and magazines can be borrowed from the library or accessed online as the library pays for many subscriptions. We think you might enjoy these:

- [Ways of Seeing](#) (Berger, J.)
- [Invisible Cities](#) (Calvino, I.)
- [Architecture Design Notebook](#) (Fawcett, P.)
- [Analysing Architecture](#) (Unwin, S.)
- [Architecture Depends](#) (Till, J.)
- [Architecture, Form, Space & Order](#) (Ching, F. D. K.)
- [Concise Townscape](#) (Cullen, G.)
- [Model Making](#) (Werner, M.)

Suggested journals to read on a regular basis:

- Architect's Journal
- Architecture Review
- Architecture Today
- Detail Magazine
- Domus

Click on the titles to take you
to Blackwells bookshop



EQUIPMENT

ANALOGUE

Architectural education combines drawing, testing, model making, photography, filmmaking, sketching, experimentation, computer presentations, analysis and written work which all requires equipment.

We do not suggest you buy overly expensive materials but instead experiment with found objects and recycled basics. It's more about how neat you are with your work rather than what you are making your models from. Here are some basics that are worth investing in as follows.



- Sketchbook (you will receive one on your first day)
- Mechanical Pencil
- Pencil Leads
- 3 x Drawing Pens: e.g. 0.25mm/ 0.35mm/ 0.7mm thickness
- A thick black pen
- Tape Measure
- Masking Tape
- Metric Scale Rule: 30cm (1:20/ 1:50/ 1:100/ 1:200)
- A3 Paper
- A3 tracing paper thin
- A padlock if you want to use a locker

Don't buy everything yet as we should have a 20% discount voucher for Fred Aldous for you when you arrive. This is a lovely art shop in town.

There is no rush to buy a laptop, we have a comprehensive guide to read once you arrive. And you can also talk to the ADD team

DIGITAL

We provide very generous facilities on campus. However, most students prefer the flexibility of having their own computer. Check Unidays, Totem and StudentBeans for student discounts before purchasing. Suggested equipment:

- Laptop
- USB stick
- Wireless mouse

Please do not purchase any software before you arrive!

We do our best to provide you with software and negotiate special student discounts. You will be given 50GB of OneDrive cloud storage as part of your Microsoft Office 365 Education subscription. You will also get Adobe Creative Suite for free.

Minimum recommended specifications:

- Processor: Intel i5 / AMD Ryzen 5 (2020 or newer)
- RAM / Memory: 16GB
- Storage: 256GB HDD
- Graphics card: onboard graphics (note, this will not support real-time visualization applications and may limit some advanced 3D functionality. Try to get a laptop with at least a 4GB graphics card)

Recommended specifications:

- Processor: Intel i7 / AMD Ryzen 7 (2020 or newer)
- RAM / Memory: 32GB
- Storage: 512GB or 1TB SSD
- Graphics card: Nvidia RTX 3060 or AMD Radeon RX570 and above (or equivalent 6GB graphics card)

EQUIPMENT +



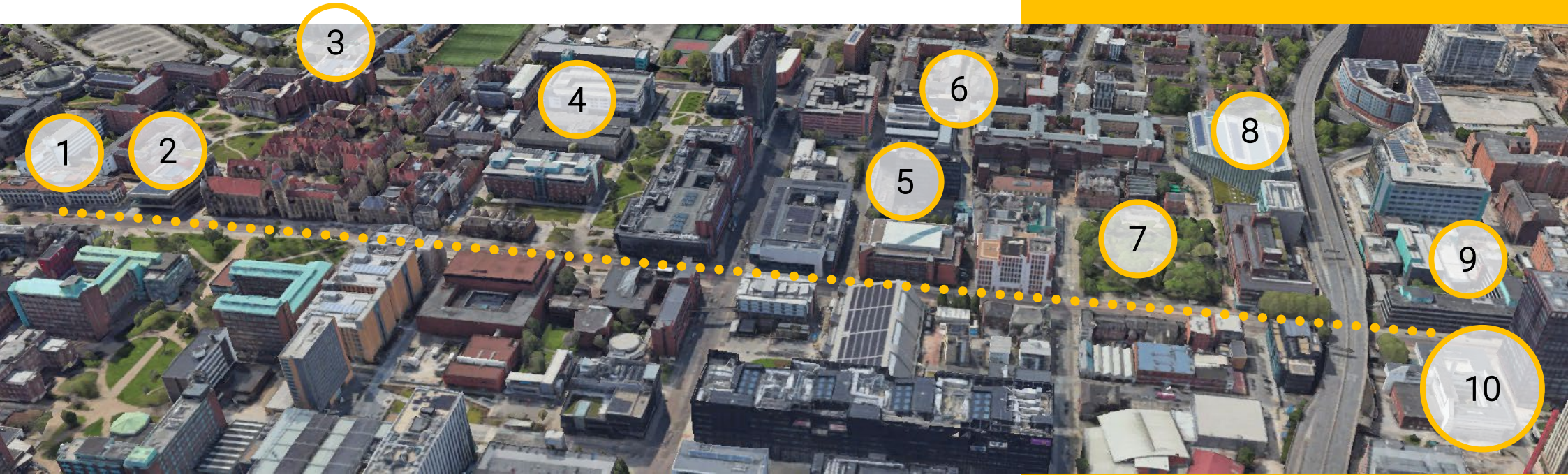
Don't buy everything yet as we should have a 20% discount voucher for Fred Aldous for you when you arrive. This is a lovely art shop in town.

GOOD TO HAVE

There are extra bits of equipment that you will gather over time. These are good to have as you need them.

- Sketching Pencils
- Cartridge Paper
- Drawing tube or portfolio
- Scrap card for model making
- Model making glue
- Cutting mat (A3)
- Steel ruler for cutting (300mm)
- Scalpel & Blades
- Suitable waterproof clothing
- Calculator (phone is fine)
- Digital camera (phone is fine)
- External hard drive – we recommend 1TB

CAMPUS



Useful buildings for architecture at UoM and MMU, although you may go in more!

- 1 : UOM UNION - Student Committee // Freshers Fair Debate // Support // Community
- 2 : UOM LEARNING COMMONS - Student Space
- 3 : UOM LIBRARY - Books // Journals // Research maps // Archives // Periodicals
- 4 : HUMANITIES BRIDGFORD STREET - Student Support // Lectures // Humanities // Technologies Dissertation Library // B.15 Workshop
- 5 : LOWRY + CHATHAM BUILDING - Lectures // Workshops // A4 + More Shop // AV Store // Digital Lab // Art Cafe // Roof Terrace
- 6 : MMU UNION - Student Union Advice Centre Union Shop // Art Supplies // Paper Pens // Paints // Modelmaking Card
- 7 : ALL SAINTS PARK - have a look inside the church on the park, it is listed (exemplar)
- 8 : MMU BUSINESS SCHOOL - Student Hub for assessment, finance and disability queries
- 9 : MMU LIBRARY - Books // Journals // Periodicals
- 10 : MTC - MSA Studio // Co-Works // Maker Space Computers // Printers // Scanners // Gallery



Oxford Road

Don't forget to enrol at both universities!

TYPICAL WEEK SEMESTER 1

The typical week gives you some idea of how you will spend your time at architecture school in BA1

Monday is dedicated to studio teaching. The day starts with a briefing lecture and then you will meet with your tutor and studio group in the MTC studios.

Tuesday and Friday are self-directed day (there is no scheduled delivery of classes or lectures).

We suggest that you dedicate Tuesday to Design 1 or 2, and Friday to Context or Production depending on the semester.

Wednesday morning is either Skills or ADD.

Wednesday afternoons have no formal teaching as we encourage you to attend extra-curricular activity such as a sports or social groups.

Thursday is dedicated to Context in semester 1 and Production in semester 2. For more information go back through this guide to see what two courses you will take in each semester.

You will be provided with a much more detailed timetable during induction week and introduced to our online intranet Moodle where all course material is stored - you will get access once you register and enrol at MMU.

MONDAY

DESIGN 1
SEMESTER 1

DESIGN 2
SEMESTER 2

TUESDAY

SELF DIRECTED
STUDY DAY

DESIGN 1
OR
DESIGN 2

WEDNESDAY

MORNINGS
SKILLS
OR ADD

AFTERNOONS
EXTRA
CURRICULAR
ACTIVITIES

THURSDAY

CONTEXT
SEMESTER 1

PRODUCTION
SEMESTER 2

FRIDAY

SELF DIRECTIONED
STUDY DAY

CONTEXT
OR
PRODUCTION

REGISTRATION AND ENROLMENT

All MSA students are required to register at both UoM and Manchester Metropolitan University and you should do so when instructed.

Please enrol early to avoid us not having you on our lists!

Information will be sent by email to you on how to proceed with enrolment. If you need help on fees, accommodation, loans, or have any other queries like this, please contact SEED:

seed.hub@manchester.ac.uk

**Enrol at
UoM AND
MMU!**

MANCHESTER SCHOOL
OF ARCHITECTURE



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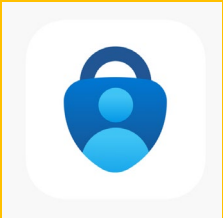
The University of Manchester

APPS TO DOWNLOAD



My MMU

Gives you access to all sorts of information including your timetable, attendance and access to Moodle, our learning platform.



Microsoft Authenticator

All universities use two factor authentication. You will need this to access My MMU and One Drive etc.



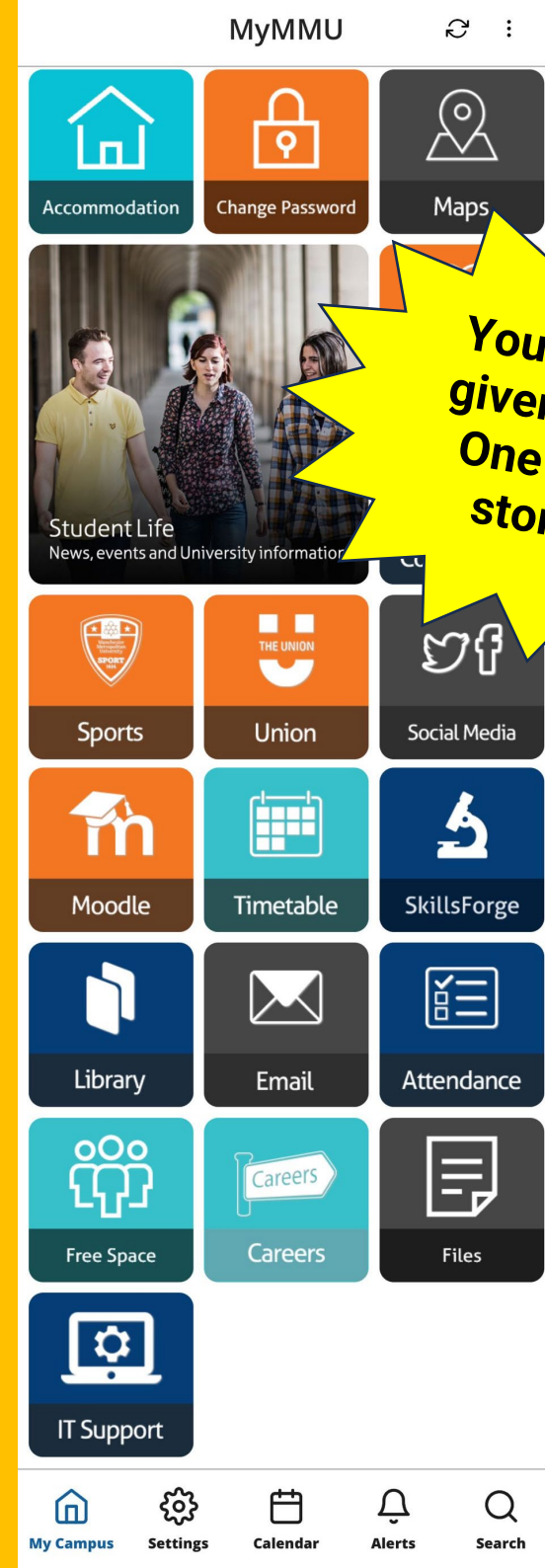
Outlook

You don't necessarily need it on your phone, but good to know you can access your emails if you need to check something.



SafeZone

UoM and MMU use this app on campus for raising alerts, first aid support and to share your location if you are working alone.



MOODLE

Moodle is our learning platform. Here you will find all the information you need to know about your course.

Our main page is the BA Moodle area (shown here) for all general information relating to the degree.

There is also a bigger Moodle area for the whole of MSA.

Each module you study will have its own dedicated Moodle area. Here you can find all documents, read announcements and upload your submissions.

Be prepared to read your emails **every day**, and set up filters or folders for more/less important messages.

Top tip: we use MMU for emails. Once you access your UoM emails, set up an auto forward to your MMU email address, make a folder for them to go in to, and then you can check the UoM emails once a week - in one place.

Useful wider links:

[MSA website](#)

[End of Year Show summer 2026](#)

BA(Hons) Architecture (11006A_2526)

[Course](#) [Settings](#) [Participants](#) [Grades](#) [Reports](#) [More ▾](#)

▼ Welcome!

[Collapse all](#)



Welcome to BA Architecture!

This is the BA Moodle area for all your BA architecture needs :)

Useful wider links:

[Main Moodle Page for MSA Students](#)

[MSA website](#)

[End of Year Show summer 2025](#)

Please check and read your emails regularly so you know what's going on and feel part of the MSA family.

Anna and the BA team



BA Announcements

> **Programme Documents and A**

> **MSSA**

> **Timetables**

**Moodle
announcements
should
automatically be
emailed to you**

MSSA

architecturemssa



We are Manchester Student Society of Architecture (MSSA), the UK's largest student society of architecture and we represent every student at Manchester School of Architecture.

We really look forward to meeting you all and hope you enjoy what we have planned this year. Join us, get involved, or simply turn up to events!

We have set up a BA1 WhatsApp group so you can get to know each other before you arrive. Some of us will be on there for any questions.

Read more about us on the MSA website here:

<https://www.msa.ac.uk/mssa/>

MSA BA1 2026!

WhatsApp group



WE CAN'T WAIT TO MEET YOU!

**Don't
forget to
enrol at
UoM and
MMU!**

UoM welcome week begins Monday 21st September
MMU welcome week begins Monday 28th September
That's 2 weeks of fun!

Please check arrival dates for your accommodation.

Your first MSA welcome lecture is on
Monday 28th September.
See you soon!

